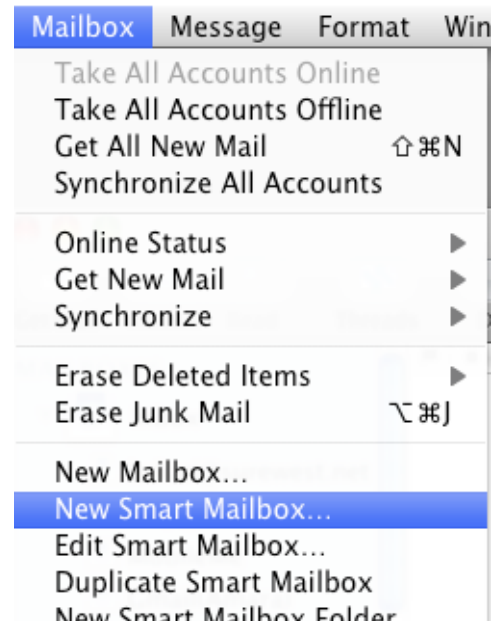


SMART MAILBOXES

Next to haggling with dozens of web browsing pages scattered all over my desktops, managing several dozen emails per day used to be the bane of my computer-using life. But not much anymore after I started using Smart Mailboxes in Apple's Mail.

Smart Mailboxes work like smart albums in iTunes. They manage files according to specified rules you set for them. These boxes or folders save you both time and frustration when dealing with the constant flow of email messages. They work even better than filters in Google Mail.

To create a Smart Mailbox, open Mail and go to *Mailbox > New Smart Mailbox* in Mail's menu bar. Upon clicking this menu item, you'll get a drop down menu for setting rules for the particular Mailbox you're creating.



The following are a handful of Smart Mailboxes I use regularly.

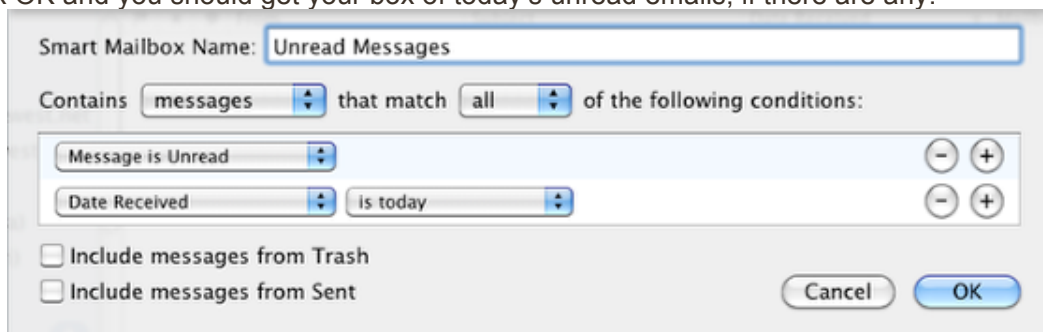
Unread Messages

For me, the most essential Smart Mailbox is what I call Unread Messages. Because emails can pile up in the Inbox, I want to only see emails that I haven't read or clicked on. That way I'm not annoyed by previously read messages.

The rules for this Smart Mailbox are:

- Select "Message is Unread".
- Click the + button and add a second rule, "*Date Received*" > "*is today*."
- Make sure the top parameter says "*Contains messages that match ALL the follow conditions*."

Now click OK and you should get your box of today's unread emails, if there are any.

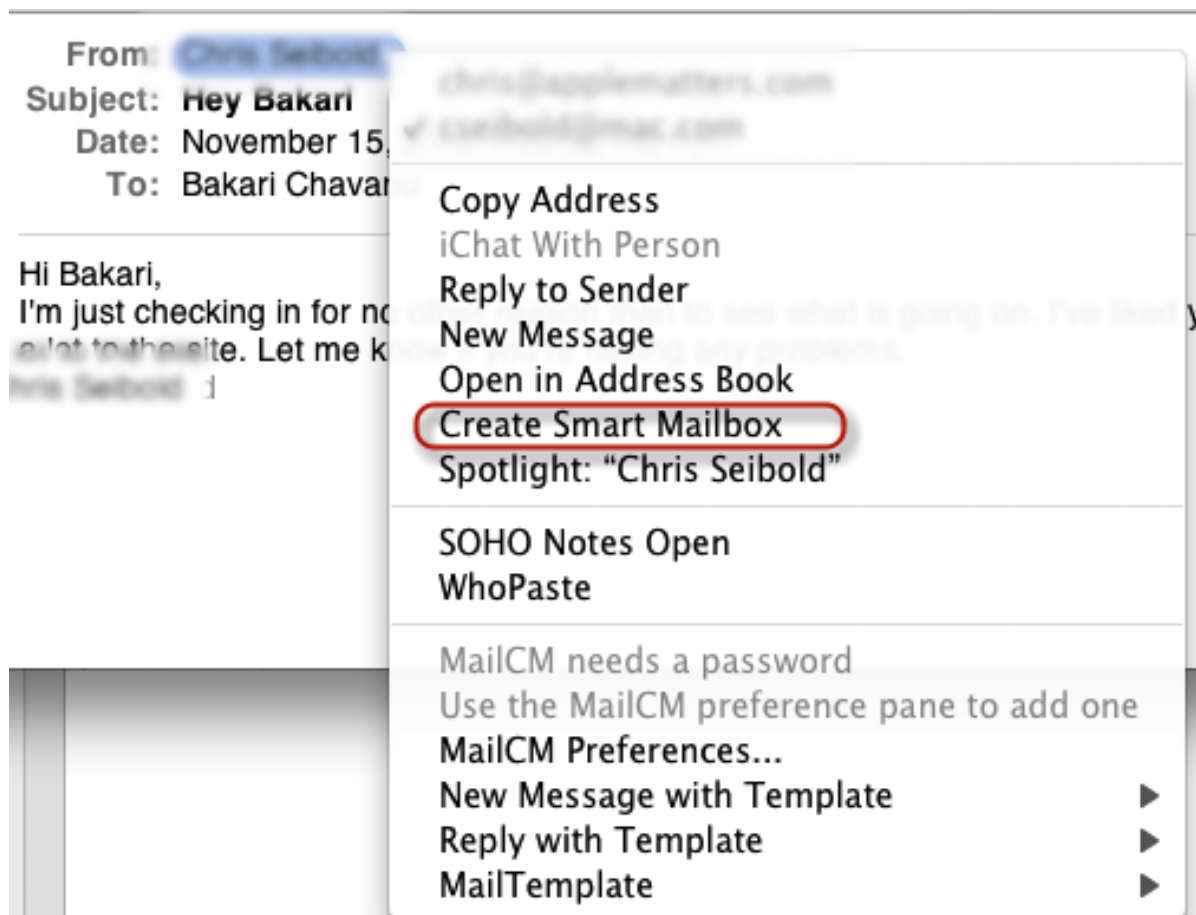


After you click to another mailbox and then re-click the unread Smart Mailbox, the messages will be gone from the box; the messages however are not deleted. You can find them in the Inbox of your email account(s) in Mail. All the Smart Mailbox does is collect and manage emails according to the rules you give it.

Smart Mailboxes For VIP's

Okay, let's move on to some other useful smart mailboxes. I have several boxes for individuals whom I want make sure their emails and the messages I exchange with them are automatically gathered into one box.

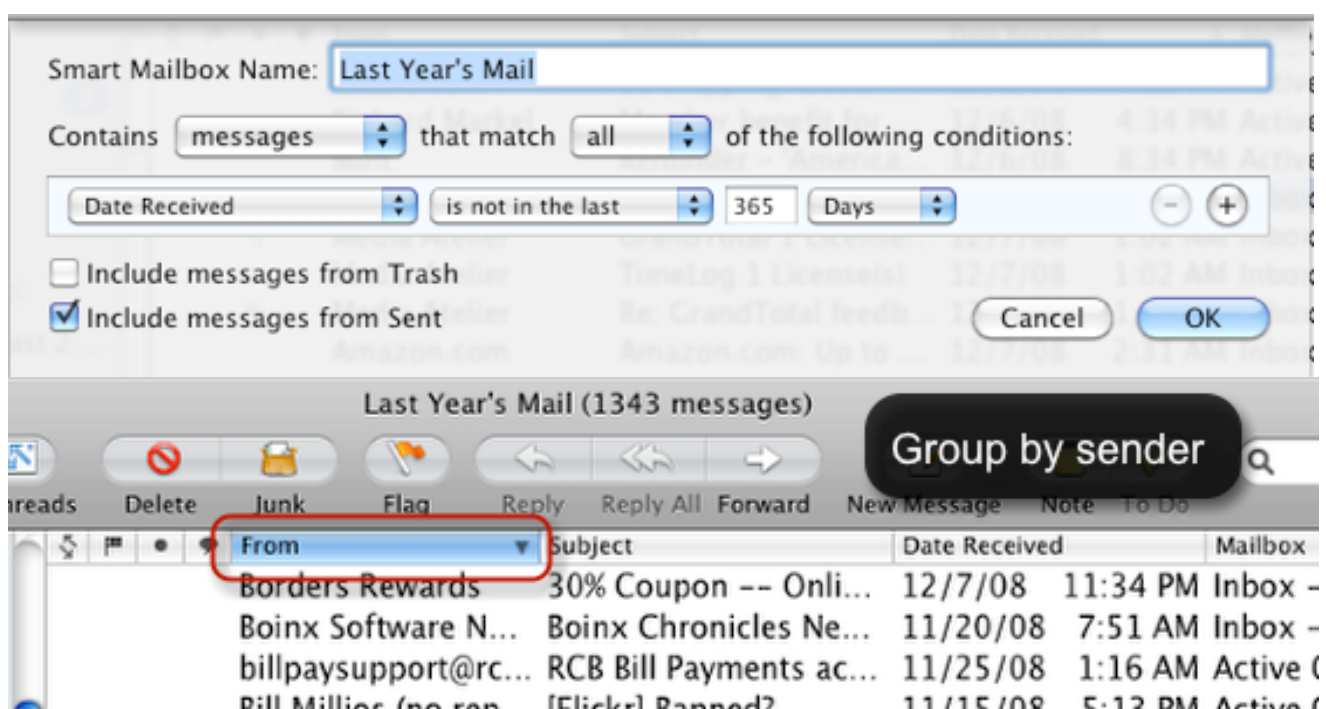
You can create the rules for this mailbox the same way as described above, or you can do it a faster way by first selecting an email from the person you want to create a Smart Mailbox for. Select the person's name/email address next to *From*, and then Control or right-clicking on that address. A drop-down box will appear. Select *Create Smart Mailbox* and set your rule as shown in the screen shot below.



Last Year's Mail

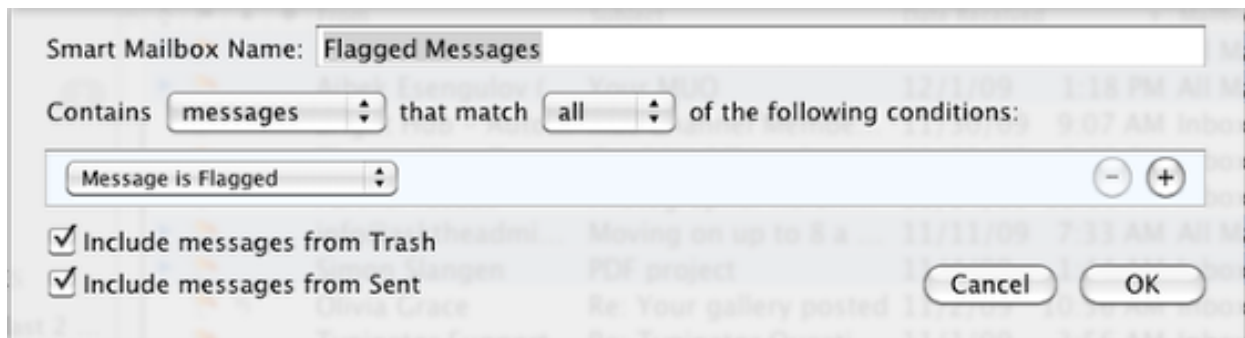
One way of getting rid of old messages is to create a Smart Mailbox that collects last year's emails that you didn't get around to trashing. The rules are shown below.

When I select this smart mailbox, I typically select the *From* column (second screenshot below) so that emails in the box are grouped by sender. That way I can go through and decide which groups of email to trash. Or if I'm really frustrated and in a bad mood, I select them all and delete.



Flagged Messages

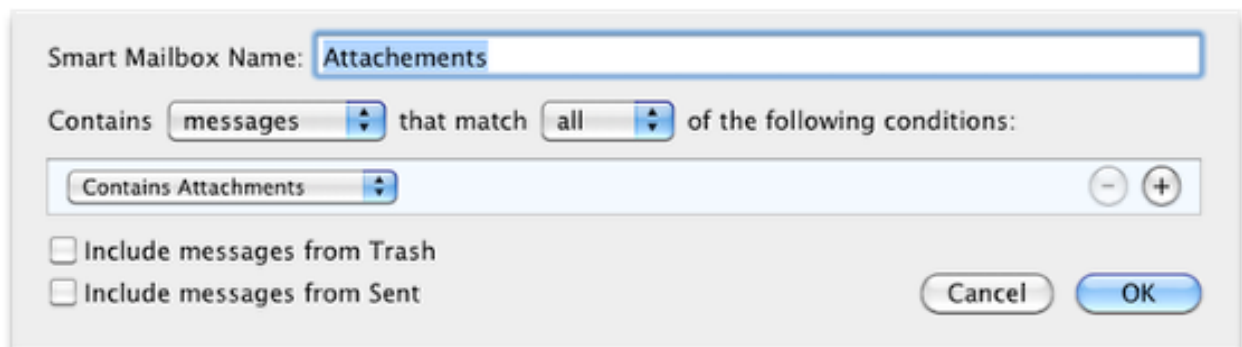
This one works great for flagged messages. Often I need to review or respond to various emails, so I flag them and then open this Smart Mailbox which collects all my flagged messages.



Attachments

This last Smart Mailbox simply deals with collecting email with attachments. Most of us get those emails from family and friends with say three or four large images attached to them. Then there are countless ad emails which, though they're not spam, they do have attachments that can build up and weight down your Mail application.

My cure for this problem is using a Smart Mailbox for attachments that I can later go through and delete, using the same method described above.



Once you get the hang of creating Smart Mailboxes, you will no doubt create ones that fit your own individual needs. The ones described above are some of my favorites. If you have a few Smart Mailbox rules that I should have included, leave a comment and describe them.